

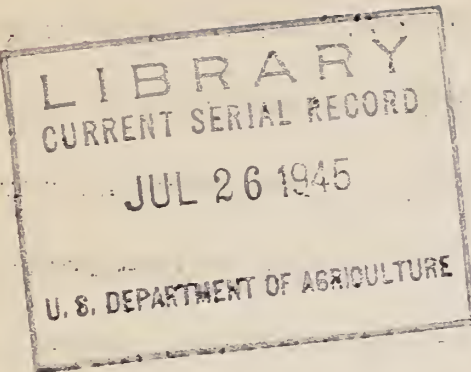
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Reserve



"THE AGRICULTURAL FRONT"

(For immediate broadcast)

March,...1944

It's March on the "Agricultural Front". While we're used to talking about the wind and the weather this month...there's many another topic of conversation on the farms...a new plan of conservation practices, the seed story, the winter vegetable picture, and prospects for Victory Gardeners. First, a review of 1944 farm conservation, as streamlined by the Agricultural Adjustment Agency.

The triple A went over each conservation practice with two questions in mind. One...will the practice increase food production in the months ahead? Two...can it be administered efficiently? If a practice failed to meet those two tests, it wasn't approved. As a result the AAA program was divided into five principal sections: First...fertilizers and other conservation materials; second...cover crops; third...harvesting of legume and grass seeds; fourth...erosion control and water conservation practices; and fifth...improvement of the range and pastures.

Each state will adopt its own set of practices from those listed under the general outline, and they will vary from State to State, depending on topography, soil, climate, and the different conservation needs of the state. Here's a note on fertilizer...particularly the application of

lime and super-phosphate. Super-phosphate properly applied produces a better standard of legumes and pasture grasses, which often crowd out the weeds. Super-phosphate improves both the quality and quantity of forage crops, and ups the carrying capacity of pastures and hay-land. We're looking for a 25 percent increase in the use of super-phosphate this year, and a considerable increase in the use of lime. These two materials not only boost per-acre production of practically all crops, but they give immediate results...greater fire-power to the soil. Application of super-phosphate and lime depends on conditions in your own fields. Your County Agent can help you calculate your requirements.

To carry out certain conservation practices, AAA will make payments direct to farmers to help carry a part of the cost. In other cases, the incentive will be supplied by furnishing materials or services to the farmer. So the triple A will bear a part of the cost of most of the conservation practices, particularly, the application of lime, phosphate and seeds. The big objective at present is to produce enough food for our fighting men and civilians. The goal for this year calls for planting a record total of 380 million acres in crops...more than ever before conservation measures will help produce this urgently needed food and they'll also discourage severe erosion and dust storms which usually follow short-sighted farming.

Now a look at the winter vegetable picture...and an encouraging picture it is throughout the United States. Despite the unexpected bad weather...such as late winter frosts, expected production for the 1944 vegetable season remains about a third higher than last year's winter harvest.

Of the seventeen winter vegetables considered in this report, cabbage heads the list with production half again as large as any previous crop. Early Irish potatoes shows a bumper crop too. And, for those who have been missing our onions, there's more good news. There will probably be a one-fourth increase over last year's crops. Tomatoes and peas show another increase of nearly double the amount harvested last year. Lima beans, cauliflower, eggplant, escarole, are other truck crops well on the up-grade in production for forty-four. Carrots, lettuce and shallots show a slight decrease in production.

On the heels of the winter vegetable report comes the War Food Administration's announcement of proposed 1944 support prices for vegetables for canning, and canned vegetables. The details of the program have been designed to facilitate production and processing. It should assure farmers of receiving the prices necessary to produce the needed quantities of vegetables for canning, in line with existing facilities. At the same time, it will protect canners who pay the support prices to growers against the possibility of inventory losses which might be incurred from maximum packs of the canned vegetables covered by the program. This program is subject to action by the Congress making provision for carrying out the price support program of the War Food Administration and will not be effective unless such provision is made. Foods under consideration are snap beans, sweet corn, green peas, tomatoes, beets, carrots, lima beans, and spinach. The grower who contracts with a certified canner will have the assurance of receiving support prices. Canners will be certified by the State Agricultural Conservation Committees when they have agreed to contract with producers for at least the specified support levels for the raw products.

Next on the March calendar comes the seed story, closely linked with the 1944 Victory Garden Program. This year there has been some concern among growers as to how much seed would be available as well as the usual problems of what to plant. Here are the answers the War Food Administration has to these questions you've been asking about seed. Seventy percent of the vegetable seeds allocated for all requirements until the first of July will go to the United States farmers, Victory Gardeners, and other civilians. And here's where the rest of our seed is going...about three and a half percent to our Allies, one percent to the U.S. territories, the Red Cross, and friendly nations, and a twenty-five percent contingency reserve. This reserve will be used to meet emergencies that may arise as the war progresses. Although certain accustomed seed varieties may be missing this spring, no gardener will have to go without enough for planting.

Last year, the 20 million Victory Gardeners on our farms, cities, towns, and suburbs produced some 8 million tons of food...enough to fill 160,000 freight cars or 800 Liberty Ships loaded with 10 thousand tons each. It amounted to forty percent of the total fresh vegetable production in the United States. Besides furnishing fresh vegetables during the growing season, Victory Gardens also provided food for canning, drying, brining, storing, and freezing. A recent Gallup Poll shows that seventy-five percent of the people canned an average of 165 jars or cans of food, or a total of over four billion cans or jars for the country.

Impressive as this record is, our food requirements for 1944 will be even greater than they were last year to meet the needs of the

eleven million men in our Armed Forces, and our allies and liberated nations. So, while farmers and commercial producers will do their utmost to produce more in forty-four, we cannot count on good growing weather everywhere, as some gardeners found last year. For prudence and safety's sake, in helping to build up stores of food, our people will have to have even more, and in many instances, larger Victory Gardens, and to make every garden produce more in 1944, wherever possible. The goal for this year is 22 million gardens.

So let's wind up today's review of the "Agricultural Front" with a final thought...There's still some time for planning, but now's the time to do it. To produce more food for nineteen forty-four is an all-year, round-the clock job, a job that requires the concentrated efforts of every farmer and home gardener in the United States.

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